

Did you know there are approximately 26,000 dogs in New Hanover County?

Consider this: A dog drops an average of 3/4 pounds of waste daily. That means approximately 19,500 pounds or 10 tons of dog waste is generated in New Hanover County each day!

When it rains, bacteria from pet waste can wash directly into storm drains and drainage ditches and eventually into our waterways — untreated!



**PROTECT
WATER QUALITY AND
YOUR HEALTH -
CLEAN UP
AFTER YOUR PET!**

CITY OF WILMINGTON
Storm Water Services
P.O. Box 1810
305 Chestnut Street
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PET WASTE, WATER QUALITY AND YOUR HEALTH



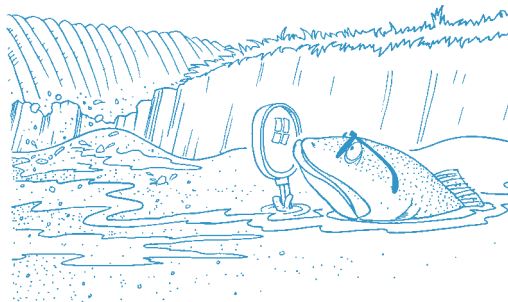
**PET WASTE IS A
HEALTH HAZARD
AND A
WATER POLLUTANT.**

**PROTECT YOUR HEALTH
AND OUR WATERWAYS...
CLEAN UP
AFTER YOUR PET!**

ARE YOU POLLUTING OUR WATERWAYS?

Pet waste is a health hazard and a storm water pollutant. Storm water runoff can wash bacteria from pet waste directly into local creeks and waterways.

Bacteria, parasites and viruses contained in pet waste are a health risk to other animals and people, especially children. In particular, fecal coliform bacteria, found in the feces of warm-blooded animals, is a common pollutant in Wilmington creeks and waterways. High levels of this bacteria indicate that water may be unsafe for human contact.



In addition to health risks, poor water quality caused by pet waste can also lead to shellfish bed closings and impaired water quality of recreational waters.

Nutrients in pet waste also encourage weed and algae growth. This nutrient-rich water is cloudy, green, unattractive and unhealthy for swimming, boating, fishing or drinking. Finally, when pet waste decays, it uses up oxygen and releases ammonia which can lead to fish kills.

ARE YOU RISKING YOUR HEALTH?

When pet waste is left on the ground or disposed of improperly, water quality in our creeks and waterways suffers and your health may be at risk too. Pets, children who play outside, and adults who garden, are at the highest risk of infection from pathogens found in pet waste. Flies also spread diseases found in pet waste.

Diseases that can be transmitted from pet waste to humans include:

Campylobacteriosis—a bacterial infection carried by dogs and cats that frequently causes diarrhea in humans.

Salmonellosis—The most common bacterial infection transmitted to humans by other animals. Symptoms include fever, muscle aches, headache, vomiting and diarrhea.

Toxoplasmosis—A protozoan parasite carried by cats that can cause birth defects such as mental retardation and blindness if a woman becomes infected during pregnancy; also a problem for people with suppressed immune systems.



Pet waste can also contain e.coli bacteria, roundworm, giardiasis, tuberculosis, gastroenteritis and cryptosporidiosis.

Fecal Coliform Bacteria

A bacteria present in the feces of warm-blooded animals and a common pollutant in Wilmington waterways. High levels of fecal coliform bacteria in waterways indicate that:

- ♦ other harmful microorganisms may be present in the water as well
- ♦ a potential health risk exists for individuals exposed to the water

CLEANING UP PET WASTE

There are many factors contributing to water pollution, but pet waste is one you can easily prevent. Listed below are several simple ways to properly dispose of pet waste:

- ♦ Always clean up after your pet
- ♦ Use a scooper, bag or shovel to pick up pet waste (Remember to put waste in a bag and seal it before placing in the trash. It's best to double-bag the waste.)
- ♦ Utilize free pet waste stations and supplies in City and County Parks
- ♦ Bury waste in a hole that is at least 5" deep and away from gardens, ditches, storm drains and waterways
- ♦ Install a pet waste digester on your property
- ♦ Waste from cats should also be contained. Provide covered litter boxes for outdoor cats. (Dispose of the kitty litter properly.)
- ♦ **DO NOT** flush pet waste down the toilet, compost it, or dump it into storm drains or ditches
- ♦ **DO NOT** leave pet waste on streets, sidewalks or other impervious (hard) surfaces where it can wash into storm drains, ditches or waterways